

# Golden Woods Riding School

Three different people that just love horses

SPECIAL TO THE COMPASS

The Golden Woods Riding School brings together three individuals from different backgrounds who enjoy horses and riding.

First is Valerie Wheaton, a BHSI Instructor, who has enjoyed teaching all ages and levels of riding for many years, not only in Canada but also in Bermuda and in her home country England. Next is Suzanne Gilbert, who has had a love of horses from a small child. Last but not least is her husband Greg, who spent most of his youth working on farms with a wide variety of animals.

Valerie Wheaton came to Canada in 1977, having spent several years in Bermuda at one of the island's busiest riding centres. It was while Valerie was in Bermuda that she taught Peter Grey, who now rides on the Olympic team and is presently Chef d'Equipe for the Canadian Three-Day Eventing Team. She has always lived and taught around the Milton and Oakville area and it was at The Horse Place on the Trafalgar Road, Hornby, that Valerie started Victoria Winter on her riding career. Victoria and her lovely horse Wedgewood are members of the Canadian Dressage Team.

Suzanne Gilbert has been riding for a number of years. Her main love is dressage. Suzanne assists Valerie with the students, and hopes to make a career of teaching. She's in charge of the books and accounting, as well as putting a tremendous amount of effort into her day job at Milton Town Hall. You'll find her behind the counter of the Building Department with a cheerful smile and helpful advice for all.

Greg is the recreational rider and 'Jack of all trades' - computer expert, Mr. Fix-it, advertising manager and business whiz, when he is not up to his elbows in the stalls in 'you know what.' He's never happier than when he's around the stables. Born in Milton, Greg is a top consultant in the fields of Quality Assurance, Electronic Testing and Calibration. His skills are highly sought after, but his heart is with

horses!

The goal of the three was a small horse farm where they could enjoy riding and caring for horses yet also allow others to share the same experience.

It all came together over a hot dog and a pop at an open air tack sale in August 1998. After that things took off like a rocket. They moved to 8295 Indian Trail, an equestrian property in Rockwood/Eden Mills on Wellington Road #44 (Guelph Line). The farm was perfectly suited for English riding, focusing around dressage and eventing, and, of course, riding trails. With a century old 16-stall bank barn, a 120' x 70' indoor arena, 120' x 150' outdoor sand ring and a five-acre training field suitable for cross-country jumping, it was the perfect start.

The care and love of horses is passed on to all that ride with them and is an integral part of what is taught at Golden Woods.

Golden Woods caters to all levels of riding, starting with children eight years old to the more mature adult. They specialize in teaching riders who don't necessarily own their own horses but wish to learn in a safe and fun environment. Beginners start off with individual private lessons until they have an enough balance and control to join a small group. Group classes for children are usually for four, so that plenty of individual attention can be given. With our more experienced riders, Valerie feel that six people are the absolute maximum.

Golden Woods believes in the proper horse to match the level of rider, proper safety equipment, how to handle and move around horses and a controlled environment to allow both enjoyment and learning.

Valerie is a board member with the Association of Riding Establishments of Ontario. ARE-Ontario, working with the Ontario Equestrian Federation, is an organization whose primary objective is to establish standards for the safe operation of riding schools in this province of which

Golden Woods is a member in good standing.

As well, Golden Woods has just completed their first March Break camp which was a great success. Next year they will try to accommodate extra riders.

During July and August they hold four weeks of Summer Camp. The week is finished off with a show and barbecue on the final day and, of course, lots of prizes.

Golden Woods welcomes visits from interested riders. If you cannot get to the farm, look for their webpage at [www.goldenwoods.on.ca](http://www.goldenwoods.on.ca)

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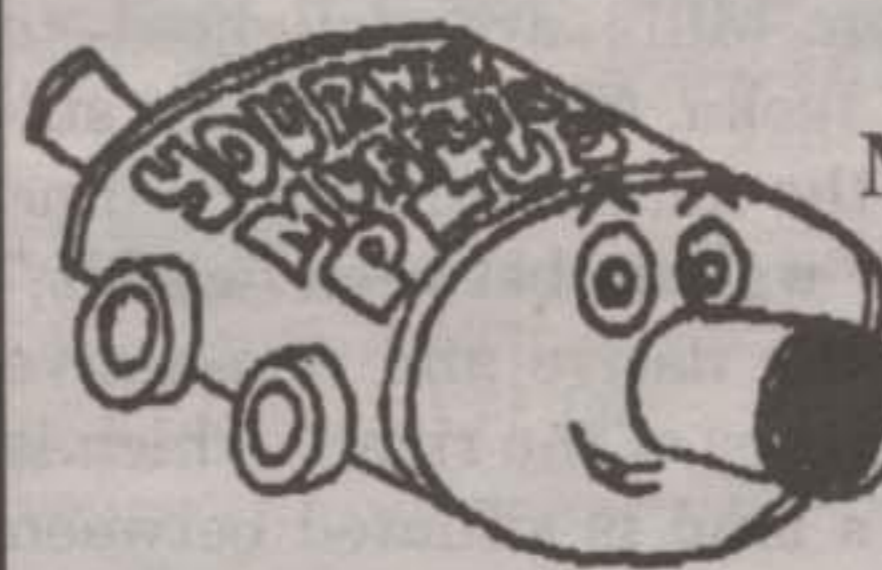
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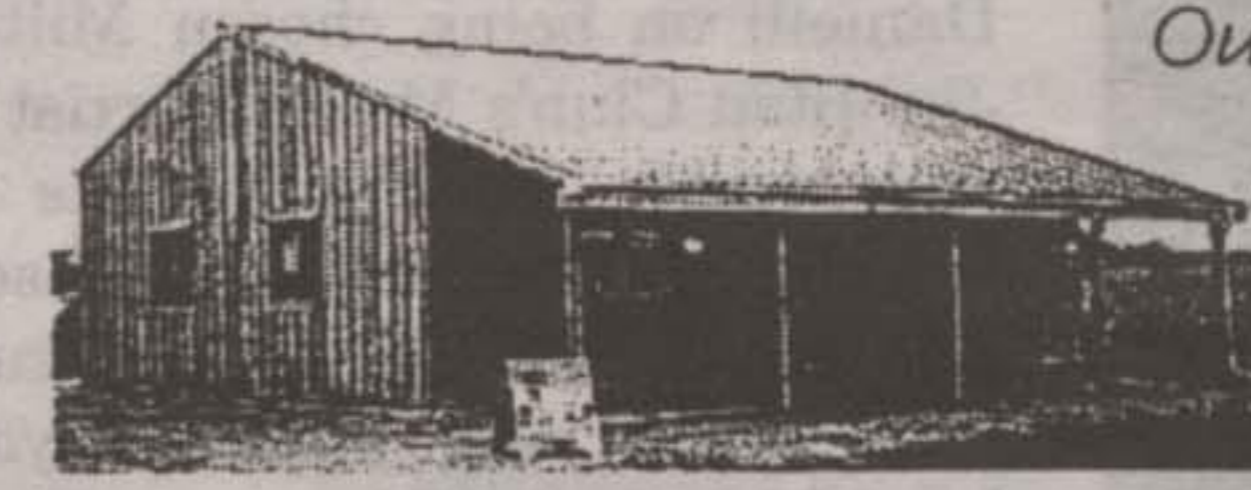
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